

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1-20 were presented in this application. Claims 1, 13 and 14 are amended, and claim 21 is added. Accordingly, claims 1-21 are now pending.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102(e)

Claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 14 and 17 are rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by Kumagai (US 6,313,926). In response, applicant traverses these rejections, and submits that independent claims 1 and 14, as amended, distinguish over Kumagai.

Independent Claim 1

Kumagai is directed to a system consisting of a facsimile apparatus 201 and an externally connected facsimile server 118, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. Facsimile apparatus 201 communicates with PSTN 116 via communication control unit (CCU) 109 and network control unit (NCU) 110. CCU 109 consists of a MODEM that controls facsimile communication with PSTN 116 via NCU 110. Facsimile apparatus 201 communicates with fax server 118 via system bus 117 and interface control unit (ICU) 115. As shown by Kumagai in FIG. 1, facsimile apparatus 201 can only communicate with LAN 119 including any client PC via system bus 117, ICU 115, and fax server 118. In general, a system bus 117 is a bus to perform data transfer between internal components and is not considered to correspond to an external network for data communication between external devices.

Moreover, Kumagai discloses, in col. 3, lines 27-42, that only the externally connected facsimile server 118 is connected to LAN 119 and performs management of LAN 119 including management of the state of information process terminals, such as client terminals, on LAN 119. Therefore, Kumagai teaches that facsimile server 118, not the facsimile apparatus 201, controls LAN communication. Kumagai discloses the storage of user registration information for log-in purposes, which does not include the reception capabilities of the user. While Kumagai

discloses a job management table for temporarily storing user registration information and job discrimination information, Kumagai fails to disclose or suggest that this stored information includes reception capabilities of the user.

Kumagai discloses, in col. 4, lines 30-44, that facsimile server 118, not facsimile apparatus 201, discriminates whether or not the received data read from facsimile apparatus 201 includes destination command data and, if the destination command data is included, it is judged whether or not the user who was indicated as a destination of the received data has been registered as a user on LAN 119 (P305). Accordingly, Kumagai fails to declare reception capabilities of a delivery recipient specified by the recipient-specifying data before receiving fax data, as recited in applicant's claim 1.

Applicant's claim 1, by contrast, recites a network facsimile machine comprising "a capabilities storage unit that stores data for delivery recipients on said second network and stores corresponding reception capabilities for said delivery recipients", and "a communication control unit that receives delivery recipient-specifying data over the PSTN, obtains reception capabilities of delivery recipients with reference to this data in said capabilities storage unit, and transmits a signal over the PSTN declaring reception capabilities of a delivery recipient specified by the recipient-specifying data before receiving fax data including image data after receiving delivery recipient-specifying data".

Thus, when the communication control unit (CCU) receives recipient delivery data, the CCU obtains necessary data, such as the LAN address and communication capabilities of the final recipient, using the capabilities storage unit or the delivery destination table. The CCU declares this obtained necessary data to a remote facsimile machine over the PSTN before the facsimile data is received. After declaration of the receiver-side communication capabilities, the network facsimile machine and the remote facsimile machine performs facsimile communication according to the declared capabilities. The facsimile data received by the network facsimile machine is then delivered to the final delivery recipient on the LAN

according to the address data stored in the capabilities storage unit. See applicant's specification, page 5, paragraph 2. Kumagai fails to disclose or suggest these features as recited in claim 1.

Independent Claim 14

In FIG. 5, Kumagai discloses a reception process performed by facsimile apparatus 201 when a facsimile data transmission command is received from a transmission side via the communication line 116. See col. 5, lines 45-49. The facsimile data transmission command includes data which is used to set the final destination of facsimile data (image data) transmitted from the facsimile apparatus corresponding to a G3 made at the transmission side to facsimile apparatus 201, as an information processing terminal on LAN 119, such as a user on the LAN. See col. 6, lines 20-29. In P502, the reception user discrimination information is received from the transmission side via communication line 116. See col. 6, lines 39-49. After user discrimination information is received, the obtained data is temporarily stored in RAM 103 and facsimile data is continuously received P503. A process is performed by facsimile apparatus 201, wherein, after the reception of the facsimile data terminates, the previously received facsimile data transmission command is analyzed (step 504) and then, a job management table for the user who has been indicated as the final destination is formed. See col. 6, lines 54-64. Kumagai further discloses, in col. 6, lines 54-64, processes performed after the reception of the facsimile data via PSTN 116 terminates. Kumagai fails to declare reception capabilities of delivery recipients to a transmission side before receiving facsimile data, as recited in applicant's claim 14.

In contrast, applicant's claim 14 recites a communication method comprising the steps of "locating internally stored reception capabilities relating to the received delivery recipient-specifying data and determining reception capabilities of a designated delivery recipient based on the received recipient-specifying data and on the internally stored reception capabilities", and "transmitting a signal to the remote facsimile machine over the PSTN declaring the reception capabilities of the

designated delivery recipient before receiving facsimile data and after receiving delivery recipient-specifying data". In reference to the previous discussion with respect to claim 1, Kumagai does not disclose or suggest these features.

Since Kumagai does not disclose or suggest each and every feature of claims 1 and 14, it cannot anticipate those claims or claims dependent thereon. The rejections under 35 USC 102(e) should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 15, 16 and 19 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Kumagai in view of Maeda (US 6,437,873), and claims 11, 12 and 20 are rejected as obvious over Kumagai in view of Oseto (US 6,097,797).

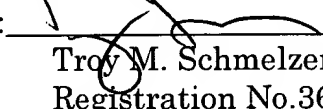
Claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 15, 16 and 19 depend from claims 1 and 14. Maeda and Oseto do not remedy the deficiencies of Kumagai discussed above with reference to claims 1 and 14. Thus, claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 15, 16 and 19 distinguish over Kumagai, Maeda and Oseto for the same reasons discussed above with reference to claims 1 and 14. The rejections under 35 USC 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

This application is now believed to be in form for allowance. The examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned to resolve any issues that remain after entry of this amendment. Any fees due with this response may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
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